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Little Filmland With Educational Bias

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EVER since the Auckland branch of the National Film Library opened its office in Lorne St in 1955, it has met a steadily increasing demand for films from more than 4000 schools and educational organisations.

Perhaps the most popular of all the audio and visual teaching aids, filmstrips are issued on practically every subject, varying from oil in Venezuela to the work of an air hostess.

The library, which is a branch of the Department of Education, serves an area ranging from Taumarunui to Cape Reinga. In this region there are 700 schools, both secondary and primary, which are regular borrowers, but at least 3000 to 4000 reels of film are issued each week. Other borrowers include such organisations as Adult Education, political groups, film societies and churches.

All the filmstrips are

A Theatrette

"Although nearly every school has its own theatre, we have a theatrette which can be loaned for viewing as well," explained Mrs Colhoun.

Another aspect of her work is the maintenance of equipment, which includes the ordering of new filing cabinets, and also the staffing of the library.

"Frequently we have visitors who want advice on the selection of a film," she added, "and so that we will be qualified to advise them, we have half an hour's preview of new films every afternoon."

Working with Mrs Colhoun are three other women who help to finalise the booking and ordering of filmstrips, which includes the sending out of telegrams to anyone who has not returned their film by the required date.

The next step is the selecting, packing and despatching of the films by the two male representatives of the staff, who also act in the capacity and secretarial duties, and also for the filing and recording of films. Any film which leaves the library must first be recorded in a large book, so that any strip can be located at any time.

With this constant cycle of booking, despatching and receiving films, all the members of the staff are kept busy.

"We never seem to have time to be bored," remarked Mrs Colhoun. "Nearly every day we have parties of school children through, sometimes in conjunction with the vocational guidance centre. We even have visits from foreign officials and Colombo Plan students from time to time."

For the country schools, the arrival of a new filmstrip is a truly momentous event, she said. In one Maori school which is really in the backblocks, many of the children have never been to an ordinary cinema.

Befriended

"In such cases the schools really befriend us," added Mrs Colhoun, "and last Christmodel as a Christmas present."

Outside of her work, Mrs Colhoun has many hobbies. Although she is not interested in the photographic side of film making, she enjoys the educational aspect, and always attends the preview sessions.

The theatre is one of her main interests. When she was living in the country, Mrs Colhoun wrote a series of articles about life as a farmer's wife for the N.Z. Herald.

"I was also a member of the Grafton Theatre for some 20 years," she said, "and in addition to acting and producing, I edited its magazine, the Prompt, for 13 years."

Now Mrs Colhoun lives in a house on the North Shore with a view of the harbour and a garden which is her pet hobby. She has always been a great reader of all kinds of literature, and with her continuing love of the theatre, leads a full life.

Star 26.7.61

Mayor

Education, serves an area ranging from Taumarunui to Cape Reinga. In this region there are 700 schools, both secondary and primary, which are regular borrowers, but at least 3000 to 4000 reels of film are issued each week. Other borrowers include such organisations as Adult Education, political groups, film societies and churches.

All the filmstrips are ordered from the head office in Wellington. Films come in from all over the world, and many have been shown in commercial theatres.

The Supervisor

The National Film Library distributes films from the United Nations and foreign legations, and also helps to compile programmes for the New Zealand Film Institute and its constituent societies.

Working as supervisor of the staff of 11 in the Auckland branch of the library is Mrs Marjorie Colhoun, chief librarian and films officer. Mrs Colhoun, who has been connected with the library for 10 years, finds her work interesting and varied.

"Although it can be exasperating as well," she admitted with a smile.

At the moment she is concerned with the advance bookings for the third term. Films are issued on a quota basis according to the roll number of membership of the borrowing organisation. The only conditions of loan are that the strip will be handled by a competent operator, and will be returned promptly and in good order. No hiring fee is charged.

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When the films are returned, it is also their responsibility to see that they are unpacked and re-sorted.

A Checking

But before the borrowed films are replaced in the stockroom along with the 20,000 others, they must be carefully checked by the four women who act as film examiners. While the film is being carefully hand-wound on to a spool, it is checked for any flaw, however minute, which may need repairing before it can be loaned out again.

The final member of the staff is responsible for typing

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Star 11.8.61

Good work on crane pontoon

The 154ft, 500-ton pontoon being built for the Auckland Harbour Board's new £500,000 floating crane is more than a third completed at the miniature shipyard built especially for the job at Westhaven.

The job is on schedule and the pontoon should be launched in March. It will be towed to one of the wharfs to be fitted with motors and the crane jib, which, when topped up, will be 130 feet high—just 12ft short of the harbour bridge clearance.

The complete crane should be ready by January or February of 1963. It will replace the floating crane Mahua, which is over 50 years old.

Star 26.7.61

First Mayor

SOMEONE who sent the Hon. T. Bloodworth, a city councillor, a clipping of the first published by-laws of the City Council, dated December 6, 1871, has caused quite a stir at the Town Hall.

For it is signed by P. A. Philips as Mayor, and on the honours board in the council chamber, his term of office is given from January 8, 1872 (a date subsequent to the by-laws) to July 6, 1874. By delving among records it has been found that he was actually appointed the first Mayor on May 22, 1871, and resigned on July 9, 1874, to become town clerk a few days later.

The correction is of particular importance. It now means that it will not be overlooked that the City Council attains its centenary in 10 years, and not in 11 as the board suggests.

On the honours board, Auckland's second Mayor, Mr W. H. Isaacs, is shown as beginning office on July 6, 1874, whereas it has now been found that he was appointed on July 20, 1874. Note: Mayors were not elected directly at a poll in those days but by the council.